
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2017

by Stephen Normington BSc DipTP MRICS MRTPI FIQ FIHE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J4525/D/17/3169019

1 Meadow Close, Houghton-Le-Spring DH5 8HU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Carl Mason against the decision of Sunderland City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/02296/FU4, dated 8 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as a 2 storey side extension - kitchen/study/utility/w.c to ground floor, bedrooms and en-suite to first floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a semi-detached dwelling located at the entrance to a residential estate of similar designed properties that are adequately proportioned in scale relative to their plot size. Very few properties on this part of Meadow Close have side extensions and as such the estate has a relatively spacious character. Immediately to the west is an area of open space and as such the property is quite prominent in views on the approach to Meadow Close and from Gillas Lane.
 4. The proposed development would involve the construction of a two storey side extension with the front having a projecting gable. There would also be a slight projection of approximately 1m at the rear which would have a hipped roof. The main part of the extension would have a ridge line commensurate with that of the existing roof of the dwelling and would extend to the property boundary with the adjoining area of open space.
 5. In order to provide guidance to achieve the acceptable design and appearance of residential extensions, the Council has adopted a Supplementary Planning Document- 'Household Alterations and Extensions' (SPD). This identifies that overly large extensions can affect the visual quality and appearance of the surrounding area. Extensions should appear as subservient to the original dwelling and the existing character and appearance of the host dwelling should be retained.
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6. The proposed extension would be a considerable addition to the property. It would be considerably larger than any other extensions on this part of Meadow Close. Owing to its scale and bulk it would not appear as a subservient to the original dwelling. Moreover, the projecting gable is not a design feature of other properties on the estate and as such it would appear as an incongruous addition that would unacceptably unbalance this pair of semi-detached properties within the streetscene.
7. In not being set back at first floor level and not having a dropped ridge the proposed extension would be contrary to the guidance provided in the SPD and would display no design features that would contribute to a subservient appearance relative to the existing dwelling. Due to its scale, it would result in the extended property occupying a considerable part of its plot size which would not respect the more adequately proportioned form of development on the remainder of the estate.
8. In addition, the extended gable of the property would represent a considerable blank and bland mass of walling positioned adjacent to the boundary with the open space area. Due to the prominent position of the property, this would appear as a dominant, unsympathetic and bulky addition that would not be reflective of the character and appearance of the host dwelling or remainder of development on Meadow Close.
9. Taking the above factors into account, the proposed development would represent disproportionate and incongruous additions to property that would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Consequently, it would be contrary to Saved Policy B2 of the Sunderland Unitary Development Plan 1998. This policy, amongst other things, requires that extensions to properties should respect and enhance the best qualities of nearby properties and relate harmoniously to the adjoining area.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, taking into account the development plan as a whole based on the evidence before me and all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Stephen Normington

INSPECTOR